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The Mackenzie Route to Canada's Northwest Territories

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THE MACKENZIE ROUTE

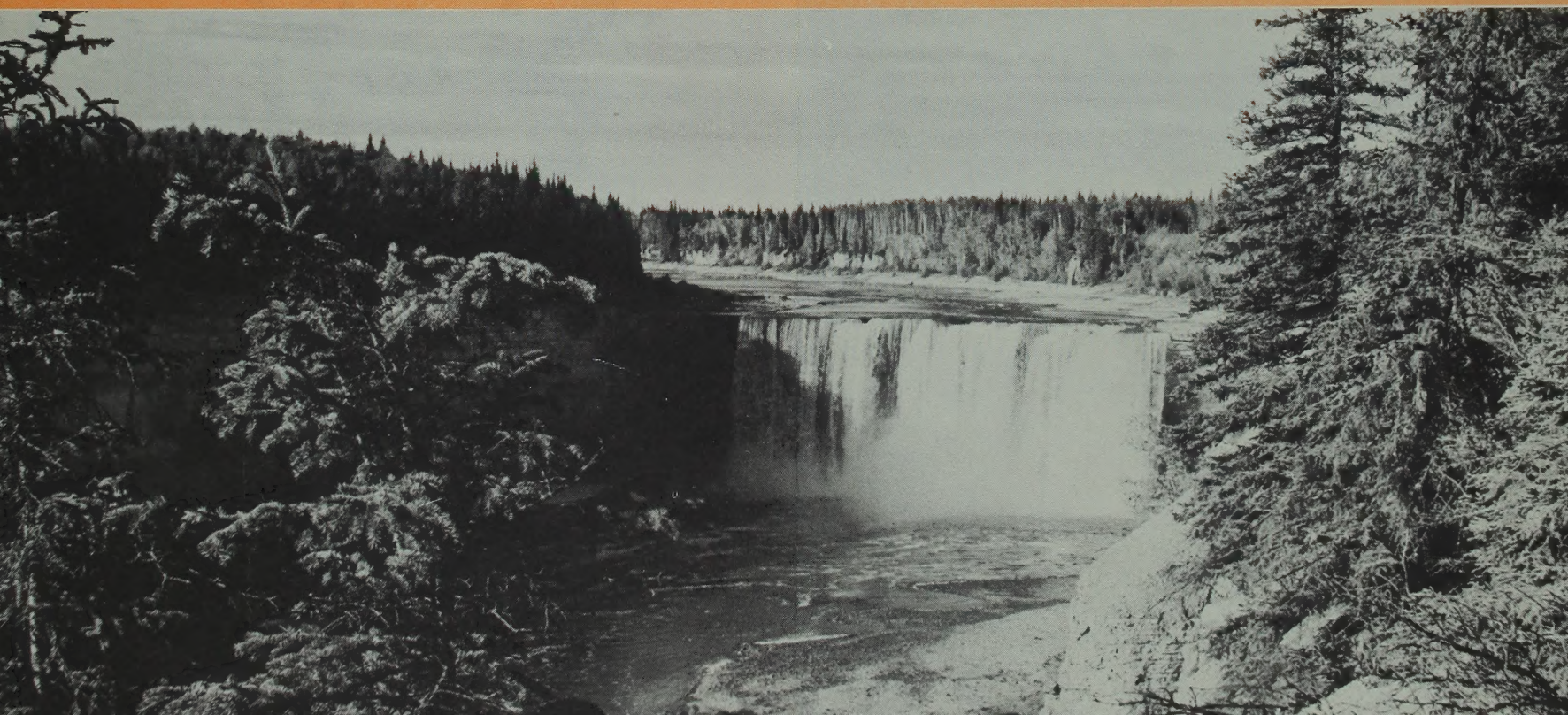
Scenic adventure through almost untouched wilderness awaits the motorist along the Mackenzie Route, an extension of the Peace River Highway network. Beginning at Grimshaw, Alberta, it reaches north 626 miles to colorful Yellowknife on the northern shore of Great Slave Lake, in the Northwest Territories.

There are three major sections to the Mackenzie Route—the Mackenzie Highway, the Hay River Highway and the Yellowknife Highway. Penetrating some of Canada's most beautiful northland areas they wend their way past swift flowing rivers, picturesque waterfalls and stately jackpine ridges. Only the occasional tiny settlement offers firm proof of habitation. The first few miles out of Grimshaw are paved; the remainder is maintained gravel.

This is no trip for the impulse traveler. One must plan, and plan with care. However, the rewards are considerable. Of the many inspiring scenes along the tri-highway system, Alexandra Falls, near the settlement of Enterprise is perhaps the most striking example. Here the cooling waters of the Hay River plunge 109 feet from a broad ledge into a deep gorge. Just one mile away a short walk from the highway leads to another of the many cataracts found along the way, Louise Falls. While small in comparison to Alexandra, this 46 foot drop is truly appealing.

There are as many as twenty daylight hours a day in the month of June, and the area averages eight hours of bright sunshine each day at that time of year. Usual summer clothing as well as some medium-weight wear as a precaution against cool evenings should be brought along. Prudent travelers take insect repellant for protection against flies and mosquitoes.

Scenic Alexandra Falls in the Mackenzie District.



PROVINCIAL APPROACH ROADS

The most direct route, Edmonton to Grimshaw, Highways 16, 43, 34 and 2 is paved except for a gravel portion of 18 miles on highway 34 south of Donnelly.

From the British Columbia-Washington border Highway 97 extends to Dawson Creek, British Columbia, which can be reached also from Vancouver via Highways 1 and 97. These routes are mostly paved. From Dawson Creek one drives to Grimshaw via Highways 49 and 2.

The main approach from Regina, Saskatchewan to Edmonton, Alberta is via Highways 11, 5, and 16, along an entirely paved route.

ROAD CONDITIONS

Since some reconstruction work will likely be in progress along the Mackenzie Highway System, motorists, planning to travel this route, should obtain the latest information available on road conditions. Road reports for the Provinces and Territories are available from their respective travel organizations the names and addresses of which are listed on the back cover of this folder.

Mackenzie Highway—Alberta #35 and N.W.T. #1

It is paved for the first 3 miles from Grimshaw to the junction of Highway 2. From this point the Mackenzie Highway is a gravel-surfaced all-weather route maintained in good condition by the Government of Alberta and the Federal Government.

Hay River Highway—N.W.T. #2

This highway was a section of the original Mackenzie Highway. It stretches from Enterprise to Hay River a distance of approximately 27 miles. The road is a gravel surfaced all-weather highway maintained in good condition.

Yellowknife Highway—N.W.T. #3

The Yellowknife Highway, recently completed, is a 24 foot gravel road throughout and links communities along the Mackenzie Highway with Fort Providence, Rae and Yellowknife, largest community in the Northwest Territories.

A modern bridge of steel construction, 680 feet long, has been built across the northwest arm of Great Slave Lake at Frank Channel.

During the ice-free season the M.V. Johnny Berens provides a ferry service across the 4,500 foot-wide Mackenzie River 132 miles north of the N.W.T.-Alberta Boundary near Fort Providence. In winter traffic can cross this vast waterway via an ice-bridge.

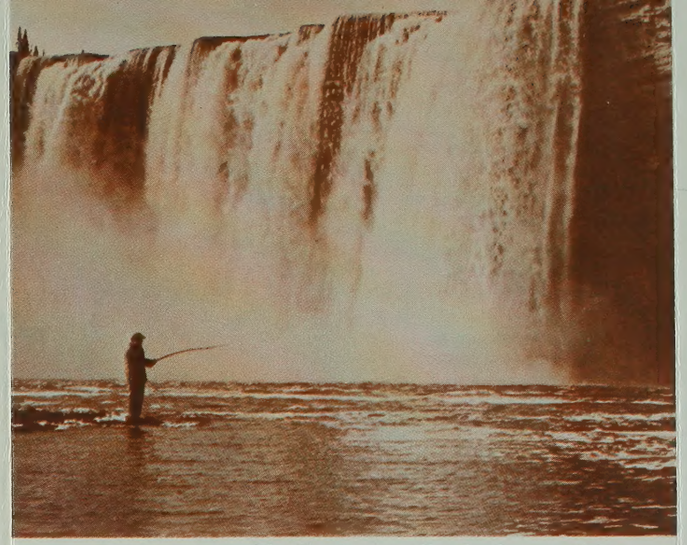
Each spring and fall there is a short interruption in traffic movement at this point. The road is closed during late May and early June because of the ice break-up, and in late October to early December due to the freeze-up.

Ingraham Trail—N.W.T.#4

Twenty miles long, gravel surfaced and 24′ wide, the Ingraham Trail extends east of Yellowknife to Prosperous Lake.

The Ingraham Trail gives access to good fishing and boating on small lakes and rivers. A 60-mile extension will be added to this road. Six miles north of Yellowknife, the Yellowknife River is crossed by a modern steel bridge 108 feet long with a roadway width of 14 feet. The overall length is 184 feet.

At Frank Channel, along the Yellowknife Highway.



The Territories offer the finest in fishing.

BUS SERVICE

Canadian Coachways operate a daily bus service from Vancouver via Prince George, and Dawson Creek to Peace River and between Edmonton and Peace River. They also operate daily service from Peace River to Hay River and three round trips per week from Hay River to Yellowknife. The one-way fare from Edmonton is $38.40 and $68.40 return.

Detailed information on schedules and rates may be obtained from Canadian Coachways Limited, 10805—120th Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

FISHING

Fishing in the Northwest Territories is permitted under licence and during open seasons. Lakes and streams are teeming with Arctic grayling, Arctic char and northern pike, but the biggest species and main drawing card is lake trout. The cost of non-resident fishing licence is $2. Complete information and up-to-date summaries of regulations can be obtained from the Northwest Territories Tourist Office, Kent-Albert Building, Ottawa, Canada. Information and regulations applicable to Alberta are available from the Alberta Travel Bureau, Highways Building, Edmonton, Alberta.

When angling in the Northwest Territories it is advisable to hire the services of a local guide. Arrangements for guides who are experienced bushmen may be made locally.

HUNTING

Hunting in the Mackenzie District of the Northwest Territories by non-residents is generally restricted to upland game birds and migratory waterfowl. However, the Territories also offer the only wild buffalo hunt in North America. The buffalo hunt is held in an area north of Fort Smith near Wood Buffalo National Park. Particulars on buffalo hunt regulations and on local conditions can be obtained by writing to Superintendent of Game, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories.

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAPS

Topographical maps can be purchased from the Map Distribution Office, Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Ottawa, Canada, or from the Administrator of the Mackenzie, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, Canada. The price is 50c each, Canadian funds.

Boating along the Great Slave River.

ACCOMMODATION AND ROADSIDE FACILITIES

Mileage From Grimshaw	Location	Service and Facilities
—	Grimshaw	Mackenzie Motel (8 units—$5–$10); Graham Hotel (26 rooms—$2 and up, Licensed) Service Stations and Restaurants.
2	Campground	On Highway 2, Kitchen Shelter, Drinking water and toilet.
54	Manning	Aurora Hotel (19 rooms—$2.75 and up, Licensed); Battle River Motel (14 units—$5 and up, landing strip, golf range, ponies and saddles); Restaurant and Service Station.
64	Campground	Kitchen Shelter, Stoves, firewood, water, toilets.
65	Hotchkiss	Gasoline.
71	Campground	Kitchen Shelter, Drinking water and toilet.
87	Campground	Kitchen Shelter, Drinking Water and Toilet.
92	Campground	Kitchen Shelter, Drinking Water and toilet.
119	Keg River Junction	Keg River Cabins (3 units—$1.50–$5, also Trailer and Tent Accommodation); Emergency Gasoline Only.
138	Campground	39 miles S. High Level—Kitchen Shelter, Stoves, firewood, water and toilets.
149	Paddle Creek	Gasoline, Cafe.
177	High Level	Blue Top Lodge (4 units—$4.50–$8.50) Men's dormitory, 10 cots —$1.50 each, Hotel, Service Station, Restaurant, groceries, campground.
217	Upper Hay River	Hudson's Bay Post, Restaurant, Gasoline (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. only).
229	Campground	8 miles N. Meander River, Kitchen Shelter, firewood, water and toilets.
264	Steen River	Cabins, Restaurant, Service Station (Summer Months Only).
294	N.W.T. Border Campground	To the right of Mackenzie Highway a 1,500 foot gravelled road leads to camp and picnic area on the bank of the Hay River. The site has picnic tables, shelter, fireplace, wood, good water from river, toilets and stove. Service station, restaurant and motel units on highway adjacent to campground access road.
339.3	Alexandra Falls Picnic Area	A scenic viewpoint and picnic site adjacent to the highway. Tables, shelters, fireplaces, toilets, wood and water are provided.
340.5	Louise Falls Picnic Area	About three-tenths of a mile via an access road to the parking area. Has tables, shelters, toilets, fireplaces, wood and water. Trail through the woods to Louise Falls.
342	Mink Creek Campground (Escarpment)	Two thousand feet from the highway to campground is adjacent to a fast-flowing stream and waterfall. Has tables, shelter, toilets, fireplace, wood and water.
345.8	Enterprise	Cabins, Service Stations, Minor Repairs, gasoline and Restaurants. NOTE: There are only 2 or 3 service stations and cafes on the direct route between Enterprise and Yellowknife, a distance of 280 miles. AN EXTRA SUPPLY OF GASOLINE AND FOOD SHOULD BE CARRIED ON THIS ROUTE. Junction of N.W.T. Highways 1 and 2. Highway 2 starts at Enterprise and terminates at Mile 30.6 beyond Hay River.
	Hay River	26.6 miles from Enterprise on NWT Highway 2: Good accommodation, service stations, churches, service clubs, private radio station, taxi, swimming, hardware store, general stores, barber shop, cleaners, Hudson's Bay Post, cafes, liquor store, telephone and telegraph service, boat rental and charter and launching site. Areas for Tenting and Trailer Parking on shore of Great Slave Lake within settlement. Hay River Hotel (Accommodate 48 persons – $6-$10 single, $8 – $13 double, offers water skiing, scenic cruises and fishing); Hay River Motel (7 units—$6 and up). Charter aircraft available. Campground, situated on the western shore of the East Channel of the Hay River, overlooking Great Slave Lake, at Mile 27.9 on Highway 2.
399.3	Road to Kakisa Lake—Campground	Campground at Lady Evelyn Falls 4 miles up road to Kakisa Lake. Picnic tables, toilets, wood and good water supply from near the top of the falls.
400.7	Kakisa River—Picnic Area	Located near Kakisa River Bridge, Picnic Area has tables and toilet facilities. Good fishing and water supply available at nearby river.
411.2	Junction	Junction of N.W.T. Highways 1 and 3. Highway 1 ends, and Highway 3 branches north across the Mackenzie River.
424.6	Dory Point Campground	Overlooking the Mackenzie River, development of this site started in 1962. Provides picnic shelter, toilets, well water, good harbor for small boats and aircraft and excellent fishing.
425.9	Service Station	Near Mackenzie River Crossing, gas and meals.
426	Picnic Site	Near south causeway of the Mackenzie River this site provides a good view of the river. Under development, it has toilet and table facilities.
426.4	Mackenzie River	South Side of River.
427.1	Mackenzie River Picnic Site	North side of River—a nearby picnic area has toilets, picnic tables and a good water supply is available from the river.
430.3	Service Station Restaurant	Near junction of road to Fort Providence, gas and meals provided.
430.6	Road to Fort Providence	Fort Providence about 3.5 miles from junction has R.C.M.P. Detachment, Government radio and meteorological station, landing field, post office, trading post, Roman Catholic Mission and Residential School — Cafe — Gasoline (open 8:00 a.m.—1:00 a.m., gasoline at any time in emergency). An unlicensed airstrip is located one mile from the intersection on the road to Fort Providence.
535.1		Airstrip—an unlicensed airstrip capable of handling up to DC-3's is located adjacent to Dinosaur Lake.
553.5	Service Station	Gasoline and oil.
554.6	Campground	This scenic campground is situated by a lake which is excellent for boating. A picnic shelter and tables are included with other essential facilities.
563.9	Road to Rae	Rae is 6.7 miles from Yellowknife Highway. R.C.M.P. Detachment, Post Office, Trading Post and a Roman Catholic Mission and Hospital.
572.1	Stagg River Campground	Facilities include tables, picnic shelter and toilets. A picturesque location, the area is excellent for fishing and the water from the Stagg River is good.
624.5	Junction	Access Roads to Yellowknife and Ingraham Trail.
625.9	Yellowknife	A modern community with every convenience; Bus lines, electric power, sewage disposal, taxis, hospital, weekly paper, golf, skating, curling, beach, banks, radio station, churches, telephone and telegraph service, liquor store, charter and schedule aircraft service and boat rentals. Accommodation: Bay-Vu Motel (ten housekeeping units completely equipped—$8 single, $12 double, freighter canoes and motors available); Gold Range Hotel (62 rooms, 18 with private bath—$5 to $7.50 single, $7.50 to $10 double and family suites $17.50 dining room, restaurant, newsstand and barber shop); Yellowknife Hotel (accommodate 60 persons—$4.50 to $8.50 single $6 to $12 double, restaurant, tours may be arranged to nearby gold mines).
642.2	Campground	On highway 4 (Ingraham Trail) Campgrounds on Prelude Lake. Also cabins and boat rental near campground.

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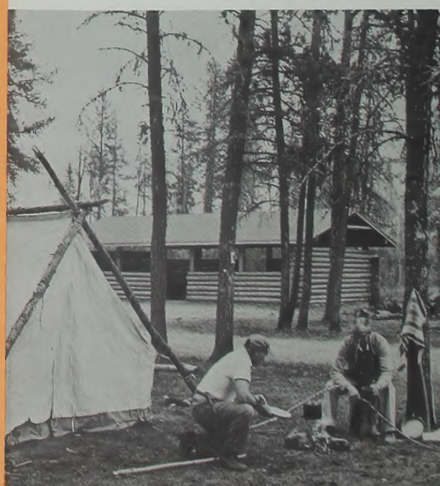
OTTAWA, 1964

View of a part of lively Yellowknife.

Campers enjoy a stop-over along the Mackenzie Route.

A modern hotel room in Yellowknife.



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Tourist and Development Branch, Winnipeg, Man.

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YUKON
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Northwest Territories Tourist Office,
150 Kent St., Ottawa, Canada.

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Ottawa, Canada.

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